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Form

FOR THE

Ordination of a Priest

OF THE

Catholic Church

TORONTO
Catholic Church Extension Society Print
119 Wellington Street West
1913

Form

FOR THE

Ordination of a Priest

OF THE

Catholic Church

TORONTO
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119 Wellington Street West
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FORM

FOR THE

ORDINATION OF A PRIEST

OF THE

CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Ordination of a Priest is one of the most solemn and impressive ceremonies of the Catholic Church. The Bishop who ordains the candidate celebrates Mass clothed in full Pontificals—Amice, Alb, Cincture, Cross, Tunic, Dalmatic, Maniple, Stole and Chasuble. These are emblematic of the sacred power which, in obedience to the divine commission, he confers upon the suppliant for ordination. Having previously received Tonsure, the four minor orders—Porter, Lector, Exorcist and Acolyte, also the sacred orders of sub-deaconship and deaconship, and, after being duly examined concerning his conduct and morals, his knowledge of the sacred scripture, theology, &c., the candidate is arrayed in the vestments of a deacon.

The Bishop proceeds with the Mass as far as the end of the Epistle, when, having taken his seat, the ordination commences.

The Archdeacon now says, "Let him approach who is to be promoted to the order of Priesthood," whereupon the Notary reads the name of the candidate for Holy Orders, who answers, "I am present," and advances towards the Bishop. He holds on his left arm a folded chasuble, in his right hand a lighted taper, and in his left a purificator for binding his hands.

He is then presented to the Bishop by the Archdeacon, saying, "Most Reverend Father, our Holy Mother, the Catholic Church, asks that this deacon here present be raised to the dignity of the Priesthood."

The Bishop then demands, "Do you know if he be worthy." To which the Archdeacon replies, "As far as human frailty will permit me to judge, I know and attest that he is worthy of this sublime office."

The Bishop responds, "Thanks be to God," and addresses the assembled clergy and people in the following charge:—

Most Beloved Brethren,—"Since the captain and crew of a vessel are by common dangers and interests equally concerned in her security, so should all who are bound together in the prosecution of the same cause, be

animated with the same zeal, and influenced with like motives. Nor is the custom instituted by our Fathers a useless one, viz.: That, in the election of those appointed as spiritual captains, or governors, the people also should be consulted, inasmuch as the life and conversation of him who is to be ordained, might, though hidden from the many, be known to a few. It is, therefore, more becoming, and even more agreeable, for the people to obey him when ordained, whose ordination they had previously sanctioned. In truth, so far as we are able to judge, the life and conduct of this deacon prove that he is worthy of promotion to the honor and dignity of the Priesthood, since it seems pleasing to God; but, lest the assent of one or of a few should be influenced by the voice of affection or of friendship, the opinion of many is to be solicited; wherefore, what you know of his conduct and morals should be freely made known, as well as your opinions of his merits. And, in this testimony for the Priesthood, you will be very careful that your judgment be not dictated by favor or affection, but by the merit of the candidate. Should any one, therefore, having anything to say against his promotion, let him, before God and for the good of religion, come forward with all confidence and let him speak what he

knows. Nevertheless, let each be mindful of the position in which he is placed."

After a moment's pause, the Bishop thus addresses the person to be ordained:

"Most beloved Son, who are about to be ordained to the office of the Priesthood, be mindful that you receive it worthily, and perform, in a manner worthy of praise, the duties of your office, when received. It behooveth the priest to offer sacrifice, to bless, to govern, to preach and to baptize. Therefore, with great fear, must you assume such an office, and take care that heavenly wisdom, exemplary conduct, and a continual observance of all virtue commend you to it. For the Lord, when commanding Moses to select seventy men from all Israel for his assistants, amongst whom he should divide the gifts of the Holy Spirit, bade him choose those whom he knew to be the presbyters of the people. You are truly a representative of these seventy ancients, if by the seven-fold spirit you observe the commandments of God, and prove yourself equally perfect in word and work. Under the same mystery also, and the same symbol, in the New Testament, the Lord chose seventy-two disciples, and sent them, two by two, before him to preach, that he might teach at the same time by word and deed that the

ministers of his Church should attain to perfection in faith and in work, founded on a two-fold love, viz.: Of God and of our neighbor. Such, therefore, should you study to be, that you may be chosen, through the grace of God, to be the assistant of Moses and of the twelve Apostles, that is, of the Bishops of the Catholic Church foreshadowed by them. Truly, by this wonderful variety of Ministers, the Catholic Church is encircled, adorned and governed; since some in it are bishops, some others priests of the second order, then deacons and sub-deacons of inferior order, consecrated to God. Thus, by the union of various grades and dignities is constituted that one harmonious body of Christ, His Church. Therefore, most beloved Son, whom the voice of your brethren has chosen to be our assistant, preserve chastity unstained, and lead a holy life. Ponder seriously upon the sacredness of the duties which you will perform. Practice what you inculcate, and while you celebrate the mystery of our Lord's death, endeavor to mortify in your own body all inclinations towards vice and concupiscence. Let your doctrine be as spiritual medicine for the people of God, and let the odor of your life be the joy of the church of Christ, that you may build up, as well by example, as by precept, the house of God,

which is His family; so that neither we who ordain you, nor you who are ordained, may incur the wrath of the Most High, but rather deserve to be remunerated by Him, which may He grant by His holy grace."—"Amen."

Here the prostration of the candidate takes place, and the Litany of the Saints is chanted or recited as far as "That thou vouchsafe to grant rest to all the faithful departed.—We beseech thee to hear us."

Then the Bishop, standing, with crosier and mitre, blesses the prostrate candidate thrice.

1st.—That Thou vouchsafe to bless this Thy elect.

Resp.—We beseech Thee to hear us.

2nd.—That Thou vouchsafe to bless and sanctify this Thy elect.

Resp.—We beseech Thee, &c.

3rd.—That Thou vouchsafe to bless, sanctify and consecrate this Thy elect.

Resp.—We beseech Thee, &c.

The Bishop again resumes his kneeling posture, and remains thus till the Litanies are concluded, when all rise.

The laying on of hands is then performed by the Bishop and the clergy in stole, by placing their hands upon the head of the candidate.

The candidate remains kneeling as during the imposition, whilst the Bishop and the priests hold their

right hands over him, and the Bishop, standing with mitre, prays:

"Let us, most beloved Brethren, invoke God, the omnipotent Father, to multiply His heavenly gifts on this His servant, whom He has chosen to the holy order of the priesthood; that, receiving this exalted sacrament in a worthy manner, he may be able to fulfil its obligations with the assistance of divine grace, through Christ our Lord. Amen."

The Bishop takes off the mitre and continues:

"Hear us, we beseech Thee, O Lord our God, and pour out upon this Thy servant the benediction of the Holy Spirit, and the virtue of sacerdotal grace, that he, whom we present for consecration, before the throne of Thy infinite mercy and goodness, may be ever pursued by the plenitude of Thy favors, through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God."

The Bishop then extends his hands and prays, as in the preface of the mass.

Bishop.—"World without end."

Resp.—"Amen."

Bishop.—"The Lord will be with you."

Resp.—"And with thy spirit."

Bishop.—"Let us raise our hearts."

Resp.—"We have lifted them up to the Lord."

Bishop.—"Let us give thanks to the Lord our God."

Resp.—"It is meet and just."

Bishop.—"It is truly meet and just, right and available to salvation that we should always and in all places give thanks to Thee, O Holy Lord, Omnipotent Father, Eternal God, author of honors, dispenser of all dignities, by whom all things prosper and are brought to perfection; Thou Who dost always increase for greater good all rational things, in agreement with Thy divince counsels. Hence, the Sacerdotal order and the offices of the Levite, instituted with mystic sacraments, increase, because, whilst Thou hast appointed Pontiffs as supreme rulers, Thou hast likewise selected men of other orders and of subordinate dignity to co-operate with them in the performance of good works. Thus in the wilderness didst Thou communicate Thy Holy Spirit, through the medium of Moses, to the seventy ancients appointed to assist him as co-laborers; and thus didst Thou also transfer to Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron, the plenitude of their father's sacerdotal graces; that by salutary sacrifices and rites of a more frequent use, the ministry of the priesthood might suffice. By that same Holy Providence, O Lord, Thou hast given teachers of the faith as com-

panions to the Apostles of Thy Son, teachers who have filled the whole earth with the divine preaching of the Gospel. On account of our infirmities, we beseech Thee, O Lord, to multiply unto us these aids; since, on account of our greater inability to reach all our duties, we the more stand in need of their assistance. Bestow, we beseech Thee, Omnipotent Father, the dignity of the priesthood upon this Thy servant; renew in him the spirit of sanctity, that he may obtain a reward becoming the rank granted him by Thee, O God. Grant that his personal conversation and conduct be a model worthy of imitation for others. May he be a provident co-operator of our order, —may every form of justice shine in him, that giving a good account of the stewardship committed to him, he may be found worthy of eternal happiness."

The Bishop then continues in a low voice:

"Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever—Amen."

The Bishop then takes his seat, and, removing the stole from the candidate's left shoulder, crosses it on his breast, saying:

"Receive thou the yoke of the Lord, for His yoke is sweet and His

burden light."

The Bishop then invests him with the chasuble, folded on the shoulders, saying:

"Receive the sacerdotal vestment, by which charity is understood, for God is powerful, to increase in thee, charity and every perfect work."

And the assistants answer:

"Thanks be to God."

The Bishop, rising, takes off the mitre and prays:

"O God, Author of all holiness, whose consecration is true and blessings bountiful, Thou, O Lord, pour the gift of Thy benediction upon this Thy servant, whom we have called to the honor of the priesthood; that by the gravity of his conduct and by the manner of his living, he may show himself to be a priest, trained in the manner which Paul recommended to Titus and Timothy; that meditating night and day upon the law, he may believe what he reads, teach what he believes, and practice what he teaches. May he be a model of justice, constancy, mercy, fortitude and of all other virtues. May he teach by example, confirm by his admonitions, and preserve pure and immaculate the gift of his ministry. May he change, by an immaculate benediction, for the benefit of the people, bread and wine into the body and blood of Thy Son; filled with the spirit of the Holy Ghost, may he rise

by inviolable charity a perfect man in the plenitude of the age of Christ, in the day of justice and eternal judgment of God, with a pure conscience and true faith, through Christ, etc."

The Bishop, then, turning towards the Altar, kneels and intones, "Veni Creator Spiritus."* After the first verse has been sung, he rises and prepares to annoint the hands of the ordained.

For this purpose, he uses Holy Oil and the following words:

"Deign to consecrate and sanctify, O Lord, these hands through this unction and our benediction."

Resp.—"Amen."

Immediately the Bishop makes the sign of the Cross with the oil on the hands of the ordained, and continues to pray.

"That whatever these hands bless shall be blessed, and whatever they consecrate shall be consecrated and sanctified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—Amen."

The hands of the ordained are now joined and bound by the Bishop.

He is then presented by the Bishop with a Chalice containing wine and water, and patena with a host, both of which must be touched whilst the Bishop says:

"Receive the power to offer sacrifice to God; to celebrate Mass, as well for the living as for the dead, in

the name of the Lord."

Resp.—"Amen."

Having arrived at this stage of the ceremony, the Bishop continues Mass as far as the Offertory.* In the meantime, the new Priest washes his hands. When the Offertory has been read, the Bishop proceeds to the middle of the altar, when he receives an offering from the newly-ordained priest with the usual ceremony.

Mass is then continued, the Priest pronouncing the words after the Bishop.

The Bishop gives the Priest communion without his saying the Confiteor, as he has celebrated conjointly with the Bishop.

When he has received, the Bishop washes his hands and reads in the words of our Lord the following admonition:

"Now I will no longer call you servants, but my friends, because you have known all things which I have done in your midst. Alleluia.

Receive the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, in you.

He it is whom my Father will send you. Alleluia.

You are my friends, if you do what I command you.

Receive the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, in you.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

He it is whom my Father will send

you. Alleluia."

Then the Bishop, with mitre on, turns, to the ordained, who, standing before the altar, makes a profession of his faith by reciting the creed.

He then kneels before the Bishop, who, placing both hands upon his head, says:

"Receive the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

Then, unfolding the chasuble, he clothes him entirely with it, saying:

"With the stole of innocence, may the Lord clothe thee."

After which, the Bishop takes his hands between his own, and says:

"Do you promise to me and my successors reverence and obedience?"

The Priest answers—"I promise."

The Bishop then gives him the kiss of peace, saying:

"The peace of the Lord be with you for ever."

Response.—"Amen."

Having received his mitre and crosier, the Bishop admonishes him thus:

"Since the duties which you are about to exercise are most important, most beloved son, I advise you to study most diligently the order of the whole mass, the consecration and the breaking of the host, and the

before you say your first mass."

Then the Bishop, rising, pronounces over him this blessing, "May the blessing of God, the Omnipotent Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, descend upon you, that you may be blessed in the order of the Priesthood, and that you may offer pleasing sacrifices for the sins and offences of the people to the Omnipotent God, to Whom be honor and glory for ever and ever.—Amen."

Mass is then continued until after the benediction, when the Priest, kneeling before the Bishop receives the following injunction:

"Most beloved son, consider diligently the order you have received and the burden placed upon your shoulders; strive to live holily and piously, pleasing Almighty God, that you may acquire His grace which may He Himself deign to grant you through His mercy.

To the newly-ordained Priest, the Archbishop adds: "After your first mass, say three other masses, viz.: One for the Holy Ghost, another for the Blessed Virgin Mary, a third for the faithful departed, and pray the Almighty God for me."

The last Gospel is then said.

See Prayer Book

* *See ordinary Prayer Book*